
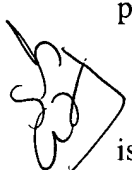


CLAIMS

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1. A split grip control lever comprising:
a fixed base portion; and
a movable upper portion that is separately pivotable relative to the fixed base portion, wherein the movable upper portion and the fixed base portion define a substantially continuous profile.
2. A split grip control lever according to claim 1, further comprising a control device positioned within the fixed base portion, wherein the movable upper portion comprises a control shaft coupled with the control device.
3. A split grip control lever according to claim 2, wherein the control device is disposed at a substantially central position relative to the lever profile such that a pivot point of the control shaft is centrally disposed relative to the lever profile.
4. A split grip control lever according to claim 2, wherein the fixed base portion is fixedly securable to a surface, and wherein the control device is disposed at a position spaced from the surface at a substantially central position relative to the lever profile.
5. A split grip control lever according to claim 2, wherein the control device is an electromechanical control device.
6. A split grip control lever according to claim 2, wherein the control device is an optical control device.
7. A split grip control lever according to claim 1, wherein the substantially continuous profile is shaped to fit an operator's hand.
8. A split grip control lever according to claim 7, wherein the substantially continuous profile is shaped to fit one of an operator's right hand or left hand.

9. A split grip control lever according to claim 1, wherein the movable upper portion is disposed relative to the fixed base portion and sized for manipulation by a operator's thumb and index finger, and wherein the fixed base portion is disposed relative to the movable upper portion and sized to support the operator's hand.

53 > 10. A control lever for machinery comprising:
a fixed based portion fixedly securable to a surface of the machinery; and
a control portion disposed adjacent the fixed base portion and movable relative to the fixed base portion, the control portion being separated from the fixed base portion via a split line and being contiguous with the fixed base portion to define a substantially continuous profile.

11. A control lever according to claim 10, further comprising a control device positioned within the fixed base portion, wherein the control portion comprises a control shaft coupled with the control device.

12. A control lever according to claim 11, wherein the control device is disposed at a substantially central position relative to the lever profile such that a pivot point of the control shaft is centrally disposed relative to the lever profile.

13. A control lever according to claim 11, wherein the fixed base portion is fixedly securable to a surface, and wherein the control device is disposed at a position spaced from the surface at a substantially central position relative to the lever profile.

54 > 14. A machine comprising:
a machine frame supporting at least one movable element; and
a control lever secured to the machine frame, the control lever comprising:
a fixed base portion fixedly secured to the machine frame, and
a movable upper portion that is separately pivotable relative to the fixed base portion for controlling movement of the at least one movable element, wherein the

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movable upper portion and the fixed base portion define a substantially continuous profile.

15. A machine according to claim 14, wherein the control lever further comprises a control device positioned within the fixed base portion, and wherein the movable upper portion comprises a control shaft coupled with the control device.

16. A machine according to claim 15, wherein the control device is disposed at a substantially central position relative to the lever profile such that a pivot point of the control shaft is centrally disposed relative to the lever profile.

17. A machine according to claim 15, wherein the control device is disposed at a position spaced from the machine frame at a substantially central position relative to the lever profile.

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